

## **CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

For the papers discussed at the meeting, [please see the Finance & Policy Committee Agenda – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025](#)

PRESENT Committee members: Cllr R Douglas (Chair)  
Cllr C Booth (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Arabella Holland (Left at 8:05pm)  
Cllr Heather Pearce  
Cllr Liz Wardlaw

Ex-Officio: Cllr Kay Wesley (Mayor)  
Cllr Robert Brittain (Deputy Mayor)

Non-Committee Members: Cllr David Brown (Left at 8:45pm)  
Cllr Suzy Firkin  
Cllr Shaun Radcliffe (Left at 8:45pm)  
Cllr Richard Walton (Left at 8:45pm)  
Cllr Amanda Martin  
Cllr Glen Williams  
Cllr Sally Holland (Left at 8.05pm)  
Cllr Heather Seddon

Also present:  
Congleton Town Council Officers D McGifford  
S Van Schepdael

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllrs: Cllr Russell Chadwick  
Cllr Mark Edwardson

#### **2. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**FAP/53/2425 RESOLVED** To approve and sign the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 14th November 2024.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs L Wardlaw declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire East.  
(Non-Committee members also noted their Cheshire East declaration however not required as they are attended as non-voting Councillors)

#### 4. Outstanding Actions

**FAP/54/2425 RESOLVED** to note the report.

#### 5. Questions from Members of the Public

There were none.

#### 6. Urgent Items

Cllr Douglas raised the below item:

Last Friday, the Cheshire East Administration put in a request to the Secretary of State for Local Government, Angela Rayner to be granted an increase in their Precept for 2025/26 of 9.99% instead of 4.99%.

I was not aware, until seeing this reported on Facebook, that Angela Rayner has the authority to grant this request without Cheshire East being obliged to take it to a Referendum.

This means that our residents could be obliged to pay a significantly higher precept to their Primary Council than we had expected at the time we drew up our Budget and Precept proposals for 2025-26.

Currently, taxpayers in Band D pay just for the services provided by Cheshire East Council the sum of £ 1,792.59. With a 4.99% increase, they would have expected to pay this April an additional £ 89.45 for the year. However, if Cheshire East's Precept increases by 9.99%, they will instead be paying an additional £ 179.08, a difference of £ 89.63.

#### 7. Ear Marked Reserves (Enclosed)

**FAP/55/2425 RESOLVED** to approve the EMR movement for 24-25 year end and recommended this to Council for approval on 23rd January 2025.

#### 8. Draft Budget and Precept for 2025-2026 (Enclosed)

**FAP/56/2425 RESOLVED** with amendments, to approve a DRAFT Budget for 2025-2026, and recommended this to Council for approval on 23rd January 2025.

##### **The below changes were made to the DRAFT Budget:**

- Remove the Office Refurbishment Capital cost £25,000
- Remove the Christmas Lights Replacement Capital cost £5,000
- Remove the Rebuild of General Reserve Capital cost £25,524.\*

\* It was noted here that the RFO reminded the Committee of the Policy in place to retain reserves at 25%, it was agreed that as this was exceptional circumstances the reserves will not be rebuilt this year and will sit at projected 23% for the 2025-2026.

**FAP/57/2425 RESOLVED** to approve the a DRAFT Precept requirement of £1,333,233 for 2025-2026, which equates to a rise of £11.92 per year/11.30% per Band D Household and recommended this to Council for approval on 23rd January 2025.

**9. Payments Over £5,000 (Enclosed)**

**FAP/56/2425 RESOLVED** to approve the payments over £5,000, and recommended these to Council for approval on 23rd January 2025.

**Meeting closed at 8:58pm  
Cllr Robert Douglas  
(Chair)**

Congleton Town Council			OK							
Management Accounts 2024-2025			Monitor							
Sep-24			Overspent							
Page 1/3										
Month	6									NOTES
Percentage	50.0%									
Finance and Policy Committee										
101	<b>Corp Management</b>									
	Staff Costs (re-allocated)	229,293	114,647	110,465	4182	96.35%	48.2%	-1.82%		
	Travel	250	125	0	125	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Training / Conferences	1,500	750	879	-129	117.20%	58.6%	8.60%		CILCA Courses
	Rent Payable	17,017	8,509	8,508	1	99.99%	50.0%	0.00%		
	Miscellaneous Office Costs	2,000	1,000	772	228	77.20%	38.6%	-11.40%		
	Telephone/Fax/Internet	3,000	1,500	1,440	60	96.00%	48.0%	-2.00%		
	Postage	1,000	500	354	146	70.80%	35.4%	-14.60%		
	Stationery & Printing	3,300	1,650	886	764	53.70%	26.8%	-23.15%		
	Subscriptions & Publications	5,100	2,550	4,480	-1930	175.68%	87.8%	37.84%		Most of subscriptions are due at start of the year
	Insurance	14,310	7,155	15,754	-8599	220.18%	110.1%	60.09%		Paid start of the year, journal required as 3 months are 25-26
	Computer/IT Costs	23,500	11,750	12,464	-714	106.08%	53.0%	3.04%		Extra work completed on MFA and Security
	Photocopy Charges	2,000	1,000	843	157	84.30%	42.2%	-7.85%		
	Recruitment Advertising	500	250	196	54	78.40%	39.2%	-10.80%		
	Bank Charges	1,240	620	539	81	86.94%	43.5%	-6.53%		
	Audit Fees - External	2,100	1,050	2,100	-1050	200.00%	100.0%	50.00%		Invoice received for 23-24 audit
	Audit Fees - Internal	1,900	950	0	950	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Accountancy Support	5,300	2,650	942	1708	35.55%	17.8%	-32.23%		
	Legal & Professional fees		0	3,586	-2355		0.0%	0.00%		See EMR BELOW
	HR & H&S support	4,800	2,400	3,647	-1247	151.96%	76.0%	25.98%		3 of 4 payments made
	Tftr from EMR			-3,586						For legal & professional expenditure
	Central Overheads reallocated	-70,984	-35,492	-42,996	7504	121.14%	60.6%	10.57%		
	<b>Corporate Management-Expenditure</b>	<b>247,126</b>	<b>123,563</b>	<b>121,273</b>	<b>-65</b>	<b>98.15%</b>	<b>49.1%</b>	<b>-0.93%</b>		
	<b>Precept 2024-2025</b>	<b>-1,182,221</b>	<b>-591,111</b>	<b>-1,182,221</b>	<b>591111</b>	<b>200.00%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>150.00%</b>		Paid in full
	Interest Receivable	-29,000	-14,500	-15,661	1161	108.01%	54.0%	104.00%		
	Miscellaneous Income	0	0	-83	83	0.00%				
	<b>Corporate Management-Income</b>	<b>-1,211,221</b>	<b>-605,611</b>	<b>-1,197,965</b>	<b>592355</b>	<b>197.81%</b>	<b>98.9%</b>	<b>48.91%</b>		
	<b>Net Income Over Expenditure</b>	<b>-964,095</b>	<b>-482,048</b>	<b>-1,076,692</b>	<b>592290</b>	<b>223.36%</b>	<b>111.7%</b>	<b>61.68%</b>		
102	<b>Civic</b>									
	Staff Costs (re-allocated)	20,090	10,045	9,393	652	93.51%	46.8%	-3.25%		
	Training / Conferences	1,000	500	0	500	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Stationery & Printing	550	275	0	275	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Marketing/Promotions	1,200	600	208	392	34.67%	17.3%	-32.67%		
	Council Newsletter	8,700	4,350	3,243	1107	74.55%	37.3%	-12.72%		
	Council Website	2,000	1,000	7,664	-6664	766.40%	383.2%	333.20%		See EMR below actual spend 13.65% £361. 1st instalment paid for website bui
	Mayor's Allowance	3,000	1,500	3,000	-1500	200.00%	100.0%	50.00%		Paid in full
	Members Expenses	200	100	0	100	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Civic Expenses	7,500	3,750	3,258	492	86.88%	43.4%	-6.56%		
	Civic Regalia	250	125	0	125	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Hall & Room Hire	6,500	3,250	3,801	-551	116.95%	58.5%	8.48%		
	Civic Artefacts and Treasures	3,400	1,700	0	1700	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%		
	Tftr from EMR	0	0	-7,274	7274					
	Central Overheads reallocated	1,564	782	947	-165	121.10%	60.5%	10.55%		
	<b>Civic-Expenditure</b>	<b>55,954</b>	<b>27,977</b>	<b>24,240</b>	<b>3737</b>	<b>86.64%</b>	<b>43.3%</b>	<b>-6.68%</b>		
107	<b>Grants</b>									
	Initial Grant Commitment	15,000	7,500	7,731	-231	103.08%	51.5%	1.54%		Dependant on awards/requests.
	Subsidised Use	4,500	2,250	2,090	160	92.89%	46.4%	-3.56%		
	Tftr from EMR Committed Grants	0	0	-7,976	7976			-50.00%		
	Specified Grants	22,333	11,167	19,017	-7851	170.30%	85.2%	35.15%		CCP invoice received in full.
	<b>Grants- Expenditure</b>	<b>41,833</b>	<b>20,917</b>	<b>20,862</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>99.74%</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>-0.13%</b>		
	<b>Capital</b>	<b>46,778</b>	<b>23,389</b>	<b>35,889</b>	<b>-12500</b>	<b>153.44%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>26.72%</b>		£25,000 to EMR processed
<b>F&amp;P Income</b>		<b>-1,211,221</b>	<b>-605,611</b>	<b>-1,203,959</b>	<b>598349</b>	<b>198.80%</b>	<b>99.4%</b>	<b>49.40%</b>	<b>Full Committee Summary includes Mayor cost centre Income £5,571</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>		<b>391,691</b>	<b>195,846</b>	<b>203,000</b>	<b>-7155</b>	<b>103.65%</b>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>1.83%</b>	<b>Full Committee Summary includes Mayor cost centre expenditure £116</b>	

Congleton Town Council									
Management Accounts 2024-25									
Sep-24									
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Month	6								
Percentage	50.0%								
<u>Community and Environment Committee</u>									
215	Floral Displays Income	-4,000	-2,000	-3,834	1834	191.70%	95.9%	45.85%	Hanging baskets income arrives start of the year Spends almost complete, award ceremony to take place
215	Floral Displays Expenditure	14,172	7,086	15,084	-7998	212.87%	106.4%	56.44%	
	<b>Total Floral</b>	<b>10,172</b>	<b>5,086</b>	<b>11,250</b>	<b>-6164</b>	<b>221.20%</b>	<b>110.6%</b>	<b>60.60%</b>	
241	Allotments Income	-190	-95	0	-95	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
241	Allotments Expenditure	1,200	600	40	560	6.67%	3.3%	-46.67%	
	<b>Total Allotment</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>7.92%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>-46.04%</b>	
300	Public Realm	3,000	1,500	110	1390	7.33%	3.7%	-46.33%	
<u>Congleton Partnership</u>									
301	Congleton Partnership Income	0	0	-15,045	15045	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	Dependant on Partnership, details are issued in Partnership Executive meetings. Carried forward balance
301	Congleton Partnership Expenditure	24,586	12,293	17,830	-5537	145.04%	72.5%	22.52%	
301	Congleton Partnership C/F	0	0	-34,666	34666	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
	<b>Total Partnership</b>	<b>24,586</b>	<b>12,293</b>	<b>-31,881</b>	<b>44,174</b>	<b>-259.34%</b>	<b>-129.7%</b>	<b>-179.67%</b>	
302	Community Development Grant Recd	0	0	-18,000	18000		0.0%	-50.00%	
302	Community Development Staff Costs	124,336	62,168	58,201	3967	93.62%	46.8%	-3.19%	
	UKSPF: See Grant Recd	0	0	7,695	-7695		0.0%	-50.00%	
	Community Development Marketing/Promotions	3,750	1,875	984	891	52.48%	26.2%	-23.76%	
	Green Initiatives	5,000	2,500	2,351	149	94.04%	47.0%	-2.98%	
	Campaign Expenditure	1,000	500	526	-26	105.20%	52.6%	2.60%	Annual subscription paid
	Tfr to EMR	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
	Tfr From EMR	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
	Community Development Overheads	9,678	4,839	5,861	-1022	121.12%	60.6%	10.56%	
	<b>Total Community Development</b>	<b>143,764</b>	<b>71,882</b>	<b>57,618</b>	<b>14,264</b>	<b>80.16%</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>-9.92%</b>	
303	Crime Reduction/CCTV Expenditure	11,426	5,713	0	5713	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
	<b>Total Crime</b>	<b>11,426</b>	<b>5,713</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5713</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-50.00%</b>	
305	Christmas Fayre/Lights Income	-3,000	-1,500	-3,087	1587	205.80%	102.9%	52.90%	
305	Christmas Fayre/Lights Expenditure	16,000	8,000	756	7244	9.45%	4.7%	-45.28%	
	<b>Total Christmas</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>-2,331</b>	<b>8831</b>	<b>-35.86%</b>	<b>-17.9%</b>	<b>-67.93%</b>	
310	Neighbourhood Plan	0	0	4,897	-4897	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	Costs covered by ERM funds
310	Neighbourhood Plan Tfr From EMR	0	0	-4,898	4898	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	No budget line set , Journal update required
	<b>Total Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-50.00%</b>	
321	Tourism Income	0	0	-3,964	3964			-50.00%	
321	Tourism Expenditure	13,600	6,800	11,459	-4659	168.51%	84.3%	34.26%	Costs dependant on timing of events
	<b>Total Tourism</b>	<b>13,600</b>	<b>6,800</b>	<b>7,495</b>	<b>-695</b>	<b>110.22%</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>5.11%</b>	
351	Luncheon Club	11,000	5,500	5,846	-346	106.29%	53.1%	3.15%	
C.E & S	Income	-7,190	-3,595	-43,930	40335	1221.97%	611.0%	560.99%	Full Committee Summary
	Expenditure	238,748	113,661	92,076	21585	81.01%	38.6%	-11.43%	Full Committee Summary

Town Hall, Assets and Services Committee		ANNUAL BUDGET	BUDGET TO M6	ACTUAL SPEND TO M6	£ VARIANCE OF M6 BUDGETS	% SPENT AGAINST M6 BUDGETS	% SPENT OF ANNUAL BUDGET	% VARIANCE AGAINST M6 EXPECTED	NOTES
									Income Variance 100% Green, 75% to 99% Amber, 0%-75% Red
									Expenditure Variance 0-100% Green 101-115% Amber 115% over Red
201	Padding Pool	54,394	27,197	27,205	-8	100.03%	50.0%	0.01%	See separate account sheet
221	Town Hall								
	Town Hall - Expenditure	230,529	115,265	152,708	-37444	132.48%	66.2%	16.24%	Without Grants TH Expenditure is 97.8%
	Town Hall - Income	-119,750	-59,875	-98,084	38209	163.81%	81.9%	31.91%	Without grants TH income is £58970, 98%
	Net Expenditure over Income	110,779	55,390	54,624	766	98.62%	49.3%	-0.69%	
225	Congleton Information Centre								
	CIC - Expenditure	164,101	82,051	66,771	15280	81.38%	40.7%	-9.31%	See separate account sheet
	CIC- Income	-88,710	-44,355	-35,403	-8952	79.82%	39.9%	-10.09%	
	Net Expenditure over income	75,391	37,696	31,368	6328	83.21%	41.6%	-8.39%	
263	Public Toilets	7,150	3,575	1,929	1646	53.96%	27.0%	-23.02%	
270	Cenotaph	319	160	136	24	85.27%	42.6%	-7.37%	
280	Streetscape								
	Streetscape Expenditure	787,095	393,548	413,964	-20417	105.19%	52.6%	2.59%	See separate account sheet
	Streetscape - Income CEC	-419,256	-209,628	-209,628	0	100.00%	50.0%	0.00%	
	Streetscape - External work income	-15,000	-7,500	-7,486	-14	99.81%	49.9%	-0.09%	
	Streetscape - Other	-12,000	-6,000	-36	-5964	0.00%	0.0%	-50.00%	
	Streetscape - Misc. Income	-900	-450	-507	57	112.67%	56.3%	6.33%	
	S/S Income	-447,156	-223,578	-217,657	-5921	97.35%	48.7%	-1.32%	
	Net Expenditure over Income	339,939	169,970	196,307	-26338	115.50%	57.7%	7.75%	
THAS	Income	-655,616	-327,808	-351,144	23,336	107.12%	53.6%	3.56%	Full Committee Summary
	Expenditure	1,243,588	621,794	662,713	-40,919	106.58%	53.3%	3.29%	Full Committee Summary
	Total Income	-1,874,027	-937,014	-1,599,033	274,994	170.65%	85.3%	35.33%	Overall summary includes mayor summary figures not on this sheet
	Total Expenditure	1,874,027	931,301	957,789	-916,238	102.84%	51.1%	1.11%	Overall summary
	Net Income /Expenditure			-641,248	-641,244			-50.00%	Rounding allowed
	Personnel								
	Staff Costs	1,141,489	570,745	547,583	23162	95.94%	48.0%	-2.03%	
	Personnel with Pay Award for reference								
	Permanent Staff Costs - Included budget pay award *1	1,141,489	570,745	579,482	-8738	101.53%	50.8%	0.77%	Includes budgeted pay award and Temp/Casual costs
	Temp/Agency			4,520					
	*1 Budgeted pay award (5%)			27,379					
Congleton Town Council									
Management Accounts 2024-25									
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		01/04/2024	In	Out	Balance				
Reserves as at 30th September 2024		CF Balance			30/09/24				
310	General Reserve	287,256			287,256				
Ear Marked Reserves									
318	Capital Equipment Fund	-	5,000	4,543	457				
320	Capital Contingency Fund	104,421	20,000	14,591	109,830				
321	EMR Elections	20,000			20,000				
322	EMR Business Recovery Fund	3,204		725	2,479				
324	EMR Crime Prevention/Traffic calming	4,357			4,357				
326	EMR Congleton Partnership	10,000			10,000				
327	EMR Covid/Crisis	3,333			3,333				
330	EMR Ancient Treasures	3,000			3,000				
331	EMR Website	30,151		7,274	22,877				
333	EMR Training	6,000			6,000				
334	EMR Town Centre (UKSPF)	1,688			1,688				
337	EMR Toilets	24,012			24,012				
339	EMR Public Realm	8,153			8,153				
340	EMR Legal Fees	46,406		5,951	40,455				
342	EMR Tourism	2,555			2,555				
343	EMR Marketing	5,000			5,000				
344	EMR Congleton Neighbourhood Plan	832		832	-				
346	EMR Rotary Bonfire	5,000			5,000				
348	EMR Civic	1,000			1,000				
349	EMR CIL	21,684			21,684				
354	EMR Carbon Offsetting	3,000			3,000				
NEW	EMR Property Maintenance	162,468	15,000		177,468				
EMR TOTALS		466,264	40,000	33,916	472,348	472,348			